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THE 'GENTLEMAN' AS THE ROMANS KNEW HIM (Korfmacher)

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THE 'GENTLEMAN' AS THE ROMANS KNEW HIM¹

There is probably no better known interpretation in English literature of the nineteenth-century concept of the term *gentleman* than Cardinal Newman's statement '...that it is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate.'² The definition, looked at apart from its context, has been adversely criticized by some readers as painting too negative and effeminate a picture of gentlemanliness. The sentences that follow, I believe, will do much to correct such an impression. But it is of more than passing interest that the notion of not causing pain was exemplified on one recorded occasion by that prince of manners and good breeding, Julius Caesar, who, upon being served stale oil instead of fresh, consumed a larger quantity of the dressing than he customarily ate, so as not to suggest carelessness or crudity on the part of his host.³

The very word 'gentleman' goes back, of course, to the Latin *gentilis*, a member of a *gens*, or clan, and hence a person of known birth and lineage. The first definition given in Webster's New International Dictionary reflects this etymological sense with the interpretation: 'a man well born; one of good family, though not noble; one entitled to bear a coat of arms; sometimes, anyone above the social condition of a yeoman.' The Romans had no one exclusive word to correspond to the English *gentleman*, but they made out with such terms as *homo generosus*, *liber*, *ingenuus*, *nobilis*, *honestus*, *liberalis*. The different adjectives naturally conveyed various shades of interpretation of the general idea. They could even use a circumlocution, like *homo ea humanitate praeditus*, and it is possible to make a good case for the thesis that the difficult noun *humanitas*, inadequately and unconvincingly translated 'humanity', most closely approximates, in the best Roman thought, what we today mean by 'gentlemanliness.'

Any discussion of the gentleman, ancient or modern, almost inevitably runs, sooner or later, into the distinction between gentlemanliness of external bearing and gentlemanliness of inner excellence. In the year 1553, the collection of Sundry Godly Prayers points the difference with the words of exhortation⁴: '...that as they be called gentle menne in name, so they maye shewe them selves in al theyr doinges gentle, curteous, louyng...unto theyr inferiours.' There is an outer smoothness and smartness and ready affability, which, along with a surface sureness of one's self and a touch of apparent sophistication, that pass for gentlemanliness to the superficial observer in all ages. The Romans expressed the type by the word *urbanus*, a 'city-dweller', and sometimes by the term *scurra*, though the latter vocable is more familiar in the sense of 'wit', or 'buffoon.' Plautus combines the two in the taunt of the rough-and-ready slave Grumio to the debonaire Tranio [Mostellaria 15-16]:

Tu urbanus vero scurra, deliciae populi,

Rus mihi tu obiectas?...⁵

'Well, you citified dandy, everybody's pet, are you going to throw the farm up to me?'

In that remarkable and Chesterfieldian document, Cicero's treatise to his son On Duties, there is much of solid worth, much in the way of sound ethical teaching in the best Stoic traditions. But there are also numerous directions looking to the gentleman's external attitudes, bearing, and occupations. Thus in the First Book⁶ Cicero counsels the reader in these words: '...Further, a man must maintain a neatness of appearance that is neither offensive nor excessively dainty, but just sufficient to avoid a rustic and uncultured carelessness. The same rule is to be observed in regard to dress, in which, as in all things else, one will do best to observe a middle course.' Then, as to external bearing, he remarks:

'Moreover, a man must be on his guard against either an enervated kind of leisureliness in his walking that would make him look like a basket-bearer in a religious processional or undue hastening in his movements, for such speed causes him to pant, change color, and distort his features. Such manifestations indicate emphatically a lack of poise...'

Perhaps the best example that Roman literature has to offer of the young gentleman of fashion, recognizable from the smartness of his attire and the easy sophistication of his manner, is the gay young blade who may be materialized from Ovid's *Amores* and his *Ars Amatoria*. Such a devil-may-care, roistering, hard-living representative of the brisk and flippant society of Rome in the early years of the Empire, akin to the impudent youths of Fifth-Century Athens who were so severely caricatured by the comedian Aristophanes, was the ancient man-about-town, at home in the circus, in the theatre, in the gambling-house, in the salon, where brittle intellectualism and racy intrigue were the order of every assembly. Such, surely, was the most notable gentlemanliness of those who flocked to Clodia's drawing-room in Cicero's day, or played and plotted when Augustus was prince, or joined Petronius in the gay revels of the court of Nero. In his *Ars Amatoria*⁷ Ovid pictures such a young gentleman of fashion at the Circus with a pert damsel and indicates precisely what etiquette prescribes for his attentive flirtation.

b

But Rome, like Athens before her, and Western Europe after her, had a view of the 'gentleman' other than that which we have just suggested. If the man of polite bearing and witty affability attained to gentlemanliness by these conscious attitudes, there were those who were born gentlemen. This accords with that first definition of the term which we have already quoted from Webster and harmonizes with the well-established Classical conviction that inner worth belongs by special prerogative to those of excellent family. The very word *ingenuus*, of course, means 'free-born' and our English sense of the derived 'ingenuous', 'high-minded', 'sincere', 'candid', expresses very effectively the qualities that the Roman ideally associated with freedom of birth. The Latin adjectives that suggest 'gentlemanliness' are rarely applied to slaves, even though Plautus represents old Hegio in the *Captivi*⁸ as exclaiming: *Di vostram fidem, hominum ingenium liberale. Ut lacrimas excutiant mihi!*, as he listens to the colloquy of his two prisoners of war—'Heavens above, what gentlemanly natures the fellows have! Why, they quite bring the tears to my eyes!' Now one of the prisoners was a slave and the other a free-born man; so that here we

have a slave who is a *liberalis*. But, then, Plautus tells us himself in his epilogue that the *Captivi* is a play sui generis.⁹

Terence is more orthodox in regarding the ancient conception of gentlemanliness as identified with freedom of birth, when the youth Pamphilus in the *Andria*¹⁰ uses the words *liberi hominis* in his declaration, 'I don't think, Charinus, that it's at all the part of a gentleman, to expect a show of gratitude towards himself when he's done nothing to deserve it'; and again in the *Eunuchus*,¹¹ where the slave Parmeno uses the words *liberum adulescentem* of young Chaerea: 'Try him out in literature, in sports, in the arts; whatever a young gentleman ought to know, I'll lay my wager he's versed in.' And Cicero¹² uses the phrase *hominis ingenui et liberaliter educati* of a gentleman in remarking that the successors of the Stoic Diogenes and Chrysippus agreed '...that it was characteristic of a free-born man liberally trained to desire to be well thought of by his parents, relatives, and good men in general...'

Cicero¹³ likewise combines the two terms in the phrase *liberales doctrinae atque ingenuae*, 'studies that are liberal and befitting a free man.' In the *Academica*¹⁴ *liberalis* is combined not alone with freedom but with nobility of birth, in the phrase '...omnis liberalis et digna homine nobili ab eo percepta doctrina, 'all the training he has had of a liberal nature, according with nobility of birth.' In the *Pro Murena*¹⁵ he brackets *honestus* and *nobilis*, in speaking of Quintus Tubero as a 'gentleman and person nobly born'; and Caesar¹⁶ speaks of '...honesti adulescentes, senatorum filii et ordinis equestris', 'gentlemanly young men, sons of senators, and of members of the equestrian order', and so of distinguished birth.

c

But we insist today that gentlemanliness is essentially a thing of character, of the soul; and the sharp injunction that heart and will must conform to external circumstance is frequent in English literature. Chaucer¹⁷ declares apodictically: 'And certes he sholde not be called a gentil man, that...ne dooth his diligence and bisyness, to kepen his good name'; and in the *Romaunt of the Rose*¹⁸ we encounter this description of action suited to character: 'who is so vertuous, And in his post nought outrageous...he is gentil bycause he doth As longith to a gentilman.' Steele remarks to similar effect in the *Tatler*:¹⁹ 'The Appellation of Gentleman is never to be affixed to a Man's Circumstances, but to his Behaviour in them.'

Now, though Juvenal in a later Roman day derisively asks: *Stemmata quid faciunt?*, there are indications that many a Roman 'gentleman' felt that the inherited nobility of his name required a responsive and positive

effort on his own part to live in such a way as to be worthy of the glory of his ancestors. The principle of noblesse oblige, especially among more serious-minded Romans, was often an incentive to goodly actions and doughty deeds. A very moving story is recorded by the Greek historian Polybius, a distinguished political thinker of the Stoic school, who was brought to Rome as a hostage in 176 B.C. and there given the freedom of the city. He was very soon on terms of close friendship with the great family of the Cornelii Scipiones, and especially with the noted Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, whom history knows as Africanus the Younger, and who had been adopted from the family of Lucius Aemilius Paullus into that of Publius Cornelius Scipio, son of the Elder Africanus. Scipio was in his own family a younger son, somewhat shy and diffident, particularly in view of the esteem which his fellow-Romans were even then according his brother Fabius. On one occasion, so Polybius tells us,²⁰ the young man of about eighteen years opened his heart to the older Greek, telling him of his lack of self-confidence in the face of family achievement and begging for advice and training. This Polybius was more than ready to agree to; and, as a Stoic, he proceeded to instruct his disciple in the paths of virtue (which Stoicism held was the highest good) and of fame (because the Stoicism of the Middle School wedded its high idealism with the practical services of statesmanship).

It was this same Africanus the Younger who in due season came to be the head of that remarkable group known to us as the Scipionic Circle, a gathering of intellectuals interested in imitating the refinement and culture that they could acquire from Hellas, in elevating popular taste, and in contributing the lessons of Greek Stoicism to Roman life and statesmanship. Scipio, Laelius, Terence, Polybius, Panaetius, the two Scaevolae, the two Gracchi, Lucilius, these were but some of the distinguished Romans and foreigners belonging to the celebrated coterie that flourished from about 167 to 129 B.C. and helped to make the Second Century a signal period for deep-placed cultural enthusiasm. As individuals, those associating themselves with the Circle of Scipio differed widely; yet it may in safety be said that an ideal, at least, of true gentlemanliness developed among them, and that it involved the forceful canon of inner excellence.

Somewhat before the star of Scipio had its rise, the Graeco-Roman Ennius had included as a prologue to the Seventh Book of his epic, the *Annales*, a picture of the trusted associate of the general Geminus Servilius, a true gentleman and, some believed²¹ a self-portrait of the poet himself:

'With these words Servilius invited in a man with whom he often willingly and affably shared his table,

his discourse, and his affairs, when he was weary from spending a great part of the day in matters of high import and in giving counsel in the broad forum and holy senate; a man to whom he could speak out boldly and without reserve on matters great and small, fair and foul of utterance, if he was so minded, with full assurance that all would be held in confidence; a man with whom he could share many a pleasure and joy both in private and in public; one whose will could not be swayed by evil intent to do a wicked act through thoughtlessness or malice; a learned, trustworthy, affable man, a good conversationalist, satisfied with what he had, happy, clever, speaking fair words in due season, a man kindly, and of few words; a man held fast to many ancient modes which a long buried antiquity had established, and to manners old and new; who held fast also to ways of many of the ancients, to laws sacred and divine; who could with prudence speak out what he had heard or hold his peace. Such a confidant it was that Servilius addressed amid battles' din.'

Perhaps the descriptive definition seems long, but writers have a way of waxing eloquent over the theme 'gentleman'. Witness the Seventeenth-Century Isaak Walton, in his *Compleat Angler*²²: 'I would rather prove myself to be a Gentleman, by being learned and humble, valiant and inoffensive, vertuous and communicable, than by a fond ostentation of riches'; and the Eighteenth-Century Appleton, in his *One Hundred and Fifty-third Sermon*: 'The Gentle-Man will treat every Man with due Respect, and will be friendly, yielding, condescending, obliging, and ready to do a Kindness.'

d

It is difficult, of course, in many cases to determine whether instances of what we are pleased to regard as 'gentlemanliness' among the Romans are to be attributed to the refining influence of Greek culture and philosophical precept or are to be regarded as stemming from the traditional Roman *mos maiorum* and the *gravitas* which was so highly prized in all ages of the city's history. The famous story told of Tiberius Gracchus by his biographer Plutarch²³ may testify to his Stoicism, his traditionalism, or primarily to a deep personal affection. For, says Plutarch, when he had found a pair of snakes upon his bed, he was told by a diviner to kill one of them; the death of the male would presage his own early demise, the death of the female, that of his wife. He slew the male and soon thereafter, says the legend, died. Surely this was the gentlemanly thing to do!

But Stoic teachings, when once established in the second century, remained ever thereafter a vitalizing force in ancient Roman life. Even those not formally allied with the school were at times unconsciously in-

fluenced by its teachings, or turned to them for particular needs, or saw in them a systematic embodiment of much traditional Roman lore. Thus the professedly Academic Cicero turns to Stoicism for his treatise *De Officiis*, and though the work is addressed to his son, it is a general handbook for the statesman, and is at times deeply ethical and at other times concerned merely with the conventional, but concerned from first to last in how the Roman gentleman should comport himself in public office. Based upon the *Περὶ Καθήκοντος* of the Stoic Panaetius, it makes the earlier writer's concepts of *decorum*, or 'propriety', the key-stone in the arch of its precepts.

Surely it was Stoicism that led the Younger Seneca to pen his famous lines to Lucilius²⁴ on the condition of slaves, lines in which he speaks with a vigor of conviction and a delicacy of feeling unquestionably betokening true gentlemanliness:

'I am happy to hear from those who have visited you that you live on terms of close friendship with your slaves. This becomes your wisdom and the lessons that you have been taught. Yet the objector will say "They are slaves." No, they are human beings. "They are slaves." No, close companions. "They are slaves." No, humble friends. "They are slaves." No, fellow-slaves, if you but reflect that Fortune has as much power over us as over them.'

A similar thoughtfulness is displayed by the Younger Pliny, that rather colorless, but earnest, young man, who was nephew of the Elder Pliny and pupil of Quintilian. Stoicism appealed to him strongly, and it is with something of Stoic earnestness, and gentlemanliness, that he relates an experience which he had at a dinner party where the food was graduated in excellence according to the social status of the guests.²⁵ '...My neighbor at the table noticed what was going on and asked me whether I approved. I said I did not. "Well," he went on, "What's your practice then?" "Why," I replied, "I put the same viands before everybody, for I invited them to dine, not to be degraded, but I treat equally in all respects those whom I have invited to be equal sharers of my table." "Even ex-slaves?" he asked. "Yes, because I consider them guests and not ex-slaves." "But," he said, "doesn't it cost you a great deal?" "Not at all." "How can that be?" "Why, because my ex-slaves do not eat the same food as I do, but I eat the same food they do."'

There are, obviously, cases almost beyond ready numbering preserved in extant Latin literature and illustrating sundry phases of what the Romans thought and did in the way of knowing and practicing the gentleman. The grave demeanor of the legendary kings, the native courtliness of Republican senators and magistrates, the generous friendliness of a Horace, the

shy self-effacement of a Vergil, the straightforward righteousness of an Antoninus Pius, the serene rectitude and courtesy of a Marcus Aurelius, all these would readily call for a far longer treatment than the limits of this sketch would allow.

But, all in all, I cannot help feeling that the largest single contributing element to the Roman concept of true gentlemanliness was derived from the Stoic doctrine of *humanitas*, an ideal looking to both mind and will. Of it the late George Converse Fiske remarks:²⁶

'...On the ethical side *humanitas* is closely related to such ideas as benevolentia, mansuetudo, suavitas, clementia. Opposed to it are inhumanitas, associated with barbaritas, crudelitas, arrogantia, superbia, durities, acerbitas, severitas. On the intellectual side it is related to litterae, eruditio, artes. It is, in short, the art of life, calling into play all the highest faculties of man, intellectual as well as moral, united in a true harmony and finding fitting expression in the bearing, speech, and action of the 'vir illa humanitate praeditus.' This ideal of "vir illa humanitate praeditus" in letters and in life is the gift of the Scipionic circle to Roman and to human civilization.'

NOTES

¹Paper read at the meeting of the Department of Classics of The Missouri State Teachers' Association, in Saint Louis, Missouri, December 5, 1941.

²Idea of a University, Discourse VIII: University Teaching.

³Suet., Div. Jul. 53; Plut., Vita Caesaris 17.5.

⁴Primer, p. iv, b.

⁵Mostellaria 15-16.

⁶1.130-131.

⁷1.135-163.

⁸418-9.

⁹1029-34.

¹⁰330-1.

¹¹476-8.

¹²De Fin. 3.57.

¹³De Orat. 3.127.

¹⁴2.1.

¹⁵75.

¹⁶De Bell. Civ. 1.51.

¹⁷Melibeus 675.

¹⁸2197.

¹⁹No. 207, Section 4.

²⁰Hist. 3.1.23.7-24.11.

²¹Gellius 12.4.4.

²²1.13.

²³Vita Tib. Gracchi 1.

²⁴Epist. Mor. 47.1.

²⁵Epist. 2.6.3-4.

²⁶Lucilius and Horace, 73-4.

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THIRD DECLENSION, WORSE CONFOUNDED

The primary purpose of this paper is to set forth, in as simple terms as possible, the findings of linguistic scholars regarding the formation of case-endings of the third declension. Since this is not a technical paper, the forms in which various case-endings are given will in most instances be simplified. E.g., the dat. -abl. plural is given as *-bus*, not **-bbos*¹; the gen. plu. as *-um*, not **ōm*.

The secondary purpose is to show that a knowledge of linguistic science not only affords a broader background for the teaching of elementary Latin, but may also contribute to practical improvements in teaching methods.

It has been traditional to class third-declension nouns according to their stems, i.e., consonant, mixed, and i-stems. However, as will presently be shown, the interaction of the endings typical of consonant stems and those typical of i-stems has been so great that, as far as the endings themselves are concerned, virtually every noun is of a mixed declension.

Observe the fundamental fallacy: that by classifying a noun as to its stem, you can thus predict the endings of its inflection.

Observe, also, that beginners' books, and some grammars, actually list what they call 'endings' in separate columns. In many instances the ending is confused with the stem; for example, we find that *urbs* is called an 'i-stem' and the ending of the gen. plu. is listed as *-ium*. Of course the ending is *-um*, exactly as it is for all nouns of this declension; the *-i-* belongs to the stem.

The following discussion deals with the endings and some of the changes attendant upon their combination with various words.

The usual ending of the nom. sg. is *-s*, seen, e.g., in *princeps*. This ending is disguised in *dux*, where the combination of the *-c* of the stem with the *-s* of the ending is written as *x*; likewise in *rēx*, where the *-g* of the stem first becomes *-c-* before the ending, and is also combined with the *-s* and written as *-x*. Yet one finds books in which *-x* is given as an ending of the nom. sg. In words whose stem ends in a dental stop, e.g., *miles*, the *-t* or *-d* is lost before the *-s*. The ending *-s* is seen in the second and the fourth and fifth declensions, and also in some Greek words of the first declension taken into Latin, e.g., *Aenēās*. It is worth noting in passing that many books list the nom. sg. masc. ending of the second declension as *-us*; this, too, is incorrect, since the *-u-* here belongs to the stem (and was, by origin, an *-o-*).

Neuters have no ending in the nom. and acc. sg.; the stem serves alone. Sometimes this stem suffers alteration, as in *mare*, which was **mari*; the *-i* of this i-stem noun is disguised because of this change. In words like *animal* and *calcar*, a final *-i* has been lost; originally they were **animāli* **calcāri*; when the *-i* was lost, normal phonetic processes resulted in the shortening of the *-a-* in the penult.

Observe that in the third declension, as in virtually all the declensions, the nom. serves as a vocative. In other words, a voc., if used at all, is merely the nom. in voc. function. In spite of this fact, many books insist upon listing a voc. as though it were a separate case-formation.

Much more could be said about the nom. sg. For instance, in the so-called adjectives of three terminations, the fem. form *ācris* preserves the true i-stem nom. sg. form. The masc., *ācer*, has lost the *-i* that was in the final syllable, and other phonetic changes have operated, resulting in the classical form used for the masc. It is, perhaps, worth pointing out that these same processes operated to produce such nom. sg. forms in the second declension as *ager*. The comparative of adjectives preserves the *-s* in the neut. nom., but other phonetic forces, which operated in words like *honor*, operated in the form used for masc. and fem. nom. sg.

The acc. of neuters needs no discussion, since it is the same as the nom. The acc. of masc. and fem. nouns ends in *-m*. When this is added to a stem that ends in a consonant, it becomes *-em*, e.g., **duc-m* becomes *ducem*. When added to a stem ending in *-i*, it yields the normal acc. sg., e.g., *turrim*. Observe, however, that almost all nouns have adopted the consonant-stem acc. sg. ending. Observe also that the i-stem ending of the acc. is frequently preserved in adverbial accs. such as *partim*, *statim*, *paulatim*, etc.

The gen. sg. ends in **-es*; here a vowel change results which yields *-is*, e.g., *ducis*. Observe that there is no trace of the ending **-is*, which might be called the typical i-stem ending; therefore, every gen. sg. has the cons. stem ending.

The ending of the dat. sg. is of disputed origin, and a discussion of it here would serve no useful purpose.

The abl. sg. ended in **-i* and was, by origin, a locative. Here, an **-i* became *-e* (e.g., *principe*), just as it did in the nom.-acc. sg. of i-stem neuters (e.g., *mare*). The abl. sg. ending of i-stems was **-id*. The *-d* was lost, yielding the classical ending *-ī*, seen, e.g., in *marī*, *turri*. Observe that nearly all masc. and fem. nouns follow the cons. stems. Observe also that present participles may have either ending, according to their use.

Concerning the nom.-acc. plu. of neuters, no comment need be made except to point out that the ending *-a* is common to all neuters plural, and to call attention to the fact that many books, having taught, e.g., that *mare* is an i-stem, incorrectly put the *-i-* in the ending and list the ending of the nom. plu. as *-ia*. The nom. plu. of cons. stems ended in **-es*, but there is not a trace of that ending in Latin,² though it is regularly found in Greek. The nom. plu. of i-stems ended in **-ey-es*, which yielded *-ēs*, adopted by all masc. and fem. nouns. Observe that it would be correct to say that every nom. plu. of such nouns is an i-stem.

The acc. plu. ending was **-ns*; when added directly to a cons. stem, it yielded *-ēs*; added to an i-stem, it yielded *-īs*. Observe that most masc. and fem. nouns, regardless of stem, have the cons. stem ending *-ēs*, the inter-action of the two forms of declension having caused i-stems to use this form very frequently.

The gen. plu. ends in *-um*, as in the fourth decl. and sometimes in the second, e.g., *virum* (Vergil, Aeneid, 1.87) and *deum* (ibid., 16.5).³ Examples are *principum* and *urbium*. The Romans, however, were by no means clear about many nouns, and we find *civitatum* in Caesar, but *civitatum* in Sallust, and while most parisyllables have *-ium* in the gen. plu., we nevertheless find *juvenum*, *canum*, etc., etc. Observe how useless it is, from a functional point of view, to insist upon a wholly artificial division of nouns by stems. Even the Romans were none too sure.

The dat.-abl. plu. ends in *-bus*. This is seen clearly in *nāvi-bus*. If this ending had been added directly to a consonant stem, it could have effected changes in spelling; e.g., **duc-bus* could yield **dug-bus*. As a result, all nouns adopted the i-stem ending. Observe how foolish it is to make a solemn classification of any noun as a 'consonant-stem' as far as endings are concerned; in the dat.-abl. plu. every noun, as far as ending is concerned, is an i-stem.

The upshot of all this may be summarized as follows:

1. For the purpose of teaching noun declensions, it is useless to speak of consonant stems and i-stems.⁴ The Romans treated the whole thing as one declension.

2. The two types of declension have so reacted upon one another that:

(a) Every nom. plu. and every dat.-abl. plu. belongs to the i-stem inflection.

(b) Every gen. sg. belongs to the cons. stem declension.

(c) Nearly every acc. sg. and abl. sg. belongs to the consonant-stem declension.

(d) Nearly every acc. plu. belongs to the cons.-stem declension.

(e) The Romans themselves were not consistent in their treatment of certain stems in the gen. plu.

3. In teaching the third declension, a beginners' class need merely learn that certain nouns⁵ have the gen. plu. in *-ium* and the acc. plu. in either *-īs* or *-ēs*, while a handful of neuters have the abl. sg. in *-ī*, and the nom.-acc. plu. in *-ia*, in addition to the gen. plu. in *-ium*. Observe that from a functional point of view, a student who knows the gender of *mare* knows that *maria* is either nom. or acc. plu.; he does not even have to know the gender of *insigne* to recognize the form *insignium*.

NOTES

¹An asterisk (*) placed before an ending or a form indicates that it is a hypothetical form, not actually found.

²It is possible that the word *quattuor* has developed from a form with this ending.

³Some books incorrectly state that this form in *-um* is a contraction of *-ōrum*.

⁴A more detailed and technical discussion of the third declension may be found in the following books:

Ernout, *Morphologie historique du Latin*² [Paris, 1927] pp. 57-102.

Bennett, *The Latin Language* (Boston, 1907) pp. 128-134.

Sommer, *Handbuch der Lateinischen Laut- und Formenlehre*³ (Heidelberg, 1914) pp. 352-387.

Buck, *Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin* (Chicago, 1933) pp. 183-197.

⁵A good rule: parisyllables and nouns whose gen. sg. penult ends in a consonant.

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REREADING THE ILIAD

A rereading of the Iliad during the war days inevitably convinced the reader that a Classic, no matter how ancient it may be, is always as timely as the morning newspaper. He will understand why it is that great artists are always our contemporaries. The war of Troy will be for the reader of the Iliad another descriptive approach to the war of Germany. Homer will be a modern journalist, who, however, possesses the divine poetic inspiration that Plato attributes to great writers.

Change the sands of Troy to the mud of Italy or Poland, exchange the armor and spear for the khaki and rifle, the chariot for the tank, and you have a modern Iliad. While the external equipment is different today from that of ancient Troy, yet the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual essentials of both ancient and modern soldiers have not changed. The Iliad is the story of the young men, the flower of Greece and Troy with all the ambitions and loves and joys and charming characteristics of youths who fought and died for an ideal. The theme of the Iliad is the theme of our war today. It is the noble death and the glorious sacrifice of the fairest of the land.

'The mightiest were there and with the mightiest they fought.'

Homer waved his magic wand and there burst forth in immortal bloom the tremendously intense emotions that throb through the veins of every soldier of every war. That saddest of all Homer's lines, 'They perished in Troy far away from their homes,' strikes the pathetic note that rings from the modern telegrams, 'Missing in action' or 'We regret to announce that your son has died somewhere in Italy.'

Achilles and Patroclus, with their deep love for one another, are but examples of the splendid buddies of the modern camps. Their friendship is the more firmly knit because they know one of them may shortly die. Patroclus died and left a heartbroken Achilles behind him.

'In youth's first bloom reluctantly he dies.'

'And a storm cloud of anguish enshrouded Achilles.'

'Patroclus, my trusty comrade, the one I loved as my own life is dead, he is fallen.'

Today a similar cry will break from the sorrowful soul of a soldier who has lost his best friend.

The young soldiers of the Iliad were fighting for an ideal even as our own boys today. Homer at times turns the floodlight searchingly into their hearts and we see how they sometimes wonder why all this horror and death surround them when they have no hate for their enemy. After all, they want only their parents and wives, not this blood and death. No doubt today a feeling of bewilderment steals softly into the minds of our modern soldiers and they wonder why they fight. Yet even while they wonder why, Homer's warriors 'but do and die.' The noble war-cry of an Achilles even when he knows that he will die if he fights, 'I will accept death,' is the cry of the modern youth as he unflinchingly chooses a short life for an honorable cause to the long life that might otherwise be his.

Beautifully too has Homer portrayed the saddest part of every war—the heart-breaking separation of parents and sons, of wives and husbands, and of father and children. Read again the pathetic farewell of Hector and his wife and child. You will know then what has happened in thousands of homes during the past few years. There are smiles and loving words in that scene, but you can see the tears in their eyes and you can feel their hearts break. But Hector goes off to his death that future generations may some day have a home such as he enjoyed. Our men leave home for the same cause. 'Greater love than this no man has.' Andromache will wait in vain, for Hector will never return. How true for many today!

Thetis and Priam, a mother and a father, suffer as every modern parent must suffer with an intense anxiety for their son's safety. That scene where Priam kisses the hand of the man who had slain his son depicts for us that most tragic element of all wars—that people who could live in peace and joy together cannot do it, for they must be enemies in time of war.

And so you browse through the Iliad again, your mind unites the Trojan and the European wars. Young men have not changed. They fight now as they did then. They are brave and loyal and generous. They sometimes wonder why they fight, but they place a deep trust in their country's leaders and feel that they will not deceive them. They miss their homes and their families and want to see them again. Yet they feel that they are fighting for them and they are willing to die for them. Before you have finished the Iliad and have been thrilled by the noble deeds of the young soldiers and have laughed and wept with them and their loved ones you catch the real lesson of the entire poem. There is something glorious and inspiring about these young men. They are giving up their all because they know it is their duty. When a man performs his duty Homer calls him noble. That is the lesson for us in this modern war—we see, thanks to Homer, the tremendous nobility of our own soldiers as they lay down their lives for duty's sake. We appreciated their nobility before, but now the genius of Homer has presented it to us in a new way. We appreciate them all the more because we reread the Iliad.

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